

PEACE NEWS

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2d.

Doubly safeguarded guarantees ensure—and actual examples in other directions prove—that aid could safely reach

Belgium's Starving Children

A scheme, an organization, and men are ready waiting to give them that help—but still they cry

WHY DOESN'T HELP COME?

A grave report, ignored by the British press, has appeared in the USA of more than 8,300,000 Belgians (out of a population of 8,400,000) living on "starvation rations"; and of some 2,000,000 young Belgians who "will be cursed for the rest of their lives by stunted and impoverished physique, weakened and degenerated brain, and discoloured, embittered characters, unless relief comes soon."

The report appeared in the American publication, *Life*; it was from John Cudahy, former American Ambassador to Belgium, now *Life's* Special Correspondent in Berlin. Although addressed to the American public, showing them the need for the adoption of the Hoover Plan for feeding Belgium, Cudahy's facts and argument vitally affect us too. For the Belgians were our Allies; if we want them to remain our friends, we must know how our blockade hits them; how its effects could be lessened without food from America finding its way into Germany.

Ex-President Hoover said of this article: "I believe it may possibly save the lives of more children than any one man has ever saved before by a magazine article." Read the extracts from it which we print below and ask whether Britain can afford, even in its own interests, to allow the conditions described to continue.

IN Portugal and Spain and Germany I met people everywhere who told me harrowing stories of famine in Belgium . . . but I cannot say my heart was really affected until I met my friend René Colin. He was 10 years old when I went away from Brussels last July [1940], a robust juvenile specimen with apple cheeks and sturdy legs . . .

I shall not soon recover from the shock of my reunion with René. It was not that his cheeks, now sunken in, had turned a pasty grey, nor that he had grown so thin that his neck resembled a pipe-stem, nor that he had heavy, smudged shadows under his eyes. It was the complete metamorphosis of the pink, hearty, happy Belgian boy I had left only ten months before into a tired little old man that stood before me, as spiritless as a wounded bird . . .

There is something revolting and depraved in the spectacle of suffering inflicted upon a child. It is like witnessing the slapping of a blind man's face, and I felt hurt and grieved and at the same time bitterly resentful.

So I went to see my friend, Dr. Nolf, at the office of the Red Cross, to tell him the story of René Colin. I must have put some of the vehemence I felt into words, for when I finished the doctor was standing at the window, his spectacles off, his handkerchief wiping his eyes.

"You must excuse me," he apologized. "I am ashamed. I am an old doctor and accustomed to human misery, but I have never seen anything like this now in Belgium."

Brussels is a city of walking wraiths, but Dr. Nolf said his main worry was not about grown people. What concerned him above all was the blighting influence upon the rising generation who could never grow without the materials for growth and who, because they could not get these materials, were rapidly developing deficiency diseases like rickets, edema,

partial blindness, bronchial pneumonia, tuberculosis, pellagra, eczema, and anemia . . . Most children, he said, were now eating only one-third of what medical opinion had always considered minimum for the maintenance of health and normal growth.

The principal of a large primary school we visited said forced fasting had reduced attendance by one-third. For the past two months he had given little thought to curriculum, since all his energy was devoted to devising methods of providing his pupils with something to eat . . .

In the classrooms heavy apathy was apparent in the listless bearing of the pale, pinched-faced boys with their dark-circled eyes . . . After 15 minutes of mental concentration, yawns would pass through the class like a breath of contagion, and the students would doze off into semi-consciousness. Sometimes one would faint from sheer weakness, so quietly that it was hardly noticeable . . . The same distressing story came from other schools . . .

All Brussels soup kitchens were organized under the direction of *Secours d'Hiver* (Winter Help), of which the moving spirit was Paul Heymans, the well-known economist and former Minister of Economic Affairs, Agriculture, and Middle Classes. This organization was supported by funds collected half from private contributors and half from the State . . .

M. Heymans said the average Belgian lives now on a daily ration of four slices of bread, one potato, two lumps of sugar or its equivalent, and from time to time, a one-ounce nugget of meat. This was the entire shrinking ration upon which the nation must somehow keep body and soul together, except for a pint of skimmed milk a day for each of the children, one half-pint for invalids and the old. It was not a happy prospect, and in another war winter, famine casualties would be tenfold those of the battlefield . . .

I talked to M. Emile de Winter, Secretary General in the Ministry of Agriculture, who gave me an inventory of Belgian food supplies. He said that bread, of rye and potato flour, now came from German sources . . .

I asked him if the Germans had requisitioned much food in Belgium and if so, whether they were still shipping much to Germany and living off the country. In answer to the first question he said it was impossible to reply with accuracy because none of the burgomasters or commune officials had made an inventory of provisions in the country before the invasion, but he was of the opinion that the Germans had taken a neat deal, not

so much by requisition as by purchase by soldiers . . . These scouring methods had only been brought to an end in December when the commanding general issued an order that no German soldier could thereafter buy any Belgian goods.

M. de Winter admitted that the German Army was being fed entirely from Germany now, and that Belgium in large part was now living on German rations. He gave the following account of what had been shipped from Germany since the occupation: 140,000 tons of rye, 30,000 tons of rye flour (enough together to make bread on the basis of the reduced ration for nearly three months), 50,000 tons of eating potatoes and 12,000 tons of seed potatoes. He said further that the German Government had promised to ship 130,000 tons of potatoes for food and 43,000 tons of seed potatoes.

After I finished my questions M. de Winter had a few questions of his own about the possibility of Belgium getting food from the US . . .

I pointed out that, on the one hand, the US was openly an enemy of Germany and that it was believed by many that our cause was identical with that of Britain. Therefore we could do nothing to weaken the blockade . . . Moreover, there was no assurance that the Germans would not appropriate any and all provisions shipped.

On the other hand, I said that it

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DO WE CONDONE NAZISM?

THE impression appears to be prevalent in some quarters that *Peace News* condones Nazism. It is an utterly mistaken impression and under ordinary circumstances we should have thought it unnecessary even to attempt to remove it. But since there is good evidence that it is shared by some members of the *Peace Pledge Union*, we will deal with it as simply as we can.

We hold that the root cause of Nazism is the unjust treatment meted out to Germany after the last war. "If you would have granted us some concession," said Stresemann shortly before his death to the British Ambassador, "we could have saved Germany for democracy and peace; but you would not, or you could not." That is the simple truth of the matter. Nazism is the outcome of an unjust, dishonourable, and vindictive peace inflicted after the last war by Britain and France. Mr. Winston Churchill, speaking on November 11, 1938, said: "I have always said that if Great Britain were defeated in war I hoped she would find a Hitler to lead us back to our rightful position among nations." What is that but the confession of Mr. Churchill himself that Germany had been condemned, as the result of her defeat in a war waged for democracy and justice, to a wrongful position among nations: that she had been deliberately humiliated.

What moral right have we to insist on the evil of Nazism, when it was largely of our own creation? Still more, what right have we to insist upon that evil as a justification for the continuance of a war waged definitely with the intention, if we should be victorious, of humiliating Germany all over again but more completely than before? When we in *Peace News* deliberately hold ourselves aloof from the indiscriminate condemnation of Nazism as evil, we do so because we are determined not to lend ourselves

Ministers' Peace Pledge

WILL NOT BLESS WAR

MORE than 1,400 ministers of leading Protestant denominations in all parts of the United States have registered their "unalterable opposition" to America's "present threatened belligerency" and have pledged not to use their ministry to "bless, sanction, or support war."

This affirmation by leading ministers came in response to a letter from the Rev. Allan Knight Chalmers, minister of the Broadway Tabernacle Church, New York, who since 1935 has been acting as informal chairman of the group of ministers known throughout the country as the "Covenant of Peace Group." The statement reads:

As a Christian, I see no possibility of reconciliation between the central teachings of Jesus and the necessary operations of war; as a loyal citizen, devoted to the cause of liberty and democracy, I am unalterably opposed to the present threatened belligerency of this country. Both as a citizen and as a Christian, therefore, I must in loyalty to conscience affirm my pledge not to use my ministry to bless, sanction, or support war.

"Such a statement," Dr. Chalmers said, "seemed to be required because some people apparently think that the ministers who have been preaching peace will naturally back down now and find good reasons for changing their minds on the problem of the Christian in the time of war."

to this process of infinite perpetuation of evil. We do not deny that Nazism is evil; what we deny is that that is the important fact about it. The important fact about Nazism is that Britain is largely responsible for its emergence. Until we acknowledge this fact as a nation there is, and can be, no health in us.

Nazism is evil, but so is Churchillism. Evil in different ways, no doubt. But victorious Churchillism in the modern world will always create the counterpart of Nazism. The same mentality underlies them both: the belief that war not only is but should be the arbiter of good and evil. Once that diabolical doctrine is granted, everything is granted. The moral value of a nation depends upon its capacity to be victorious in war; and everything is legitimate in the effort to make it invincible in war.

We pacifists are determined to stand apart from this monstrous competition in evil. We condemn both parties to the hideous struggle. And when we compare the whole conduct of Britain from the end of the last war till today with the whole conduct of Germany during the same period, we condemn them both equally. This war, as Wilfred Wellock said, may begin for us in 1939; but for the German it began in 1918.

We have no power to stop the diabolical process. Demonic powers have taken possession of humanity. And these demonic powers are always at work to sap the moral courage of the pacifist. He tends to be weary of his own moral isolation, and to seek escape by joining in the chorus of indignation against Nazism. It is his duty to resist the urge. Nazism is the most perfect form of the demonry of modern war. A nation which does not utterly repudiate that demonry cannot condemn Nazism without having the lie in its soul.

TREND?

I HAVE been reading a book which gives an account of the amazing boom and collapse of the American stock-market in 1928-29. With that fresh in my mind, I am chary of saying that there is an upward trend in the Fighting Fund. I will content myself with saying that we have done better than last week. This week's contributions amount to £25 10s. 5d. Let us get back to our £50 a week level. Then I will speak cheerfully of upward trends.

The Editor.

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A PACIFIST COMMENTARY: EDITED BY "OBSERVER"

Another Step Away from Democracy

A PACIFIST observer in time of total war is necessarily detached. Whether, like the proverbial onlooker, he really sees more of the game, time alone will show. But to one pacifist at least, the chief interest of the Prime Minister's reply to the critics of national production was that it marked a further stage in the development of British democracy into—what? The substance of the reply was that Mr. Churchill refused to appoint a Minister of Supply with full powers, because his authority would have to be almost as great as the Prime Minister's own. The underlying argument was that the Commons had entrusted Mr. Churchill with leadership in the waging of a total war. It could not compel him to accept a form of organization which he did not approve.

Now that is, in theory, a perfectly legitimate attitude of a Prime Minister to Parliament in Britain. No-one doubts that if the Commons had had the courage (or the audacity) actually to vote the appointment of a Minister of Supply, Mr. Churchill would have resigned.

New Man, New Policy

THE transformation of democracy in Britain is, therefore, not Mr. Churchill's fault. He is a self-confident man: that facilitates the transformation, but is not the cause of it. The cause must be sought, first, in the divided mind of the Commons. It professes to believe that there is something radically wrong with production; yet it dares not insist on what it professes to believe to be the remedy for it. Mr. Churchill is here on impregnable ground. Virtually he says: "produce the man! Remember he must be as capable and self-confident a leader as I am. For he will have to stand up to me." In other words: "Have you an alternative to me?" And that is final. For if there were an alternative to Mr. Churchill, he would be leading the Commons into the lobby to vote against the Government on this issue.

That is clear. But behind that is the deeper question. The alternative man would need to have an alternative policy to Mr. Churchill's. This is the real crux. Mr. Churchill's policy is eagerly endorsed by the critics of production. But Mr. Churchill's policy requires the maximum of war-production. He is not an imbecile. What reason is there to suppose he is not pressing for the maximum produc-

tion compatible with the existing social and financial economic order? The Commons wants what it cannot have without a social revolution; and the Commons does not want that. Its all-powerful Minister of Production is a dream. If its dream were realized, it would vote him a nightmare.

Dictator for Duration

THE fact is that Mr. Churchill holds the Commons in awe partly by personal prestige, but more because the Commons is completely divided in itself as to the real measures to be taken to enhance production. Who is to be brought to heel? The employer or the employee? Capital or Labour? True, Mr. Churchill himself does not face this problem; he is "not interested" in it. Nevertheless, the fact that Mr. Churchill is "not interested"—like Queen Victoria—does not abolish it. It merely wards off any radical solution. And that is necessary: because any radical solution would turn this country either Fascist or Communist.

All that can be expected is a tightening up of the existing machinery; and a faith that America will see us through. Probably, Mr. Churchill is right. A new minister to tighten up the machinery is otiose; a minister with power to make radical changes would be another and a different Prime Minister. But the practical consequence is that Mr. Churchill becomes established as Dictator for the duration. The only alternative is a peace Prime Minister.

A Re-organizing Job

MEANWHILE, our failure to do anything effective to relieve the pressure on our Russian ally is a stark commentary on our production relative to Germany's. Russia has to withstand, virtually unaided, the full shock of the great German war-machine. She has shown a greater power of resistance than was expected either by the Germans or ourselves. Whether it will be great enough to bring the German attack to a standstill on the safe side of some of Russia's most vital centres, cannot be known. But the characteristic speed and energy with which the Germans are re-organizing the communications of the large territory they have conquered—rebuilding the roads, re-gauging the railways—suggests that those who think of a successful Russian counter-offensive to follow the standstill are shutting their eyes to reality.

Paradoxically, the scepticism, which is spreading throughout the Reich, about the possibility of Hitler's ending the war this year, and the stoical resignation of large sections of workers to the prospect of another dreaded war-winter simplify the task of the Hitler regime in some respects. Thus it enables the German High Command to carry out its resolve to undertake the gigantic task of modernizing the whole Russian

transport system within the occupied territories. (Times, August 4).

Why, one wonders, did not the Russians themselves undertake it?

Russia & Germany

NEVERTHELESS, I shall be unfeignedly glad if the Russians manage to prevent any further considerable penetration of their country. A Russia in being will be a valuable counterpoise to the Germanic "new Europe"; and I should welcome that not merely because I believe it would promote Hitler's will to peace, and make for more generous conditions within Europe—e.g. the treatment of Poland would improve. I should welcome it because I have a great faith in the future of Russia. I am neither of those who can denounce "Godless Russia," while secretly exalting "Godless Germany"; nor am I of those who see Russia as white and Germany as black.

In the relativities of the present struggle, there is nothing much to choose between them; but there are tremendous potentialities of good as well as evil in both. Both countries have taken the plunge into the future. The struggle between Germany and Russia has an historical significance which the struggle between Germany and Britain has not. That is really why Britain is condemned to be an onlooker. To use Hegelian terms, Russia and Germany today are thesis and antithesis; Britain will not have much to do with the synthesis.

Roosevelt's Line?

I HAVE received valuable information concerning American opinion. A trusted friend of mine has been at great pains to collect the opinions of some really representative people. The first thing to report is that the sentiment imputed to Americans recently by the New York correspondent of the Manchester Guardian, (which was quoted here) that they wanted Russia to lose is "utterly off base." The second, and even more important thing to report, is that "the sentiment for a negotiated peace is growing." I quote verbatim—the words are those of a brilliant editor of an important newspaper in Ohio.

Here's the thinking. England's balance-of-power politics on the continent is at last a failure, after keeping Europe in turmoil for four or five centuries. That game is up. Not even American soldiers could dislodge Hitler from the continent. At the worst, if he has bit off more than he can chew in Russia, he could negotiate a peace with Stalin.

So we had just as well reconcile ourselves

to a strong Power on the continent. If we could negotiate a peace now, with American leadership, that would internationalize the Mediterranean bottle-necks, save the British Empire, and ensure a confederation of the Continent that would give the little States a degree of local government, we would do well to take the lead in bringing it about.

That is the line which an uncommonly astute middle-Westerner believes that Roosevelt will eventually take.

Unseen Revolution

MY own friend, also a middle-Westerner journalist of uncommon sagacity and flair, reinforces this with arguments which are deeply interesting in themselves but hardly lend themselves to summary. The gist of the position is that neither Europe nor America itself realizes that America has undergone a revolution under Roosevelt; and it is on the basis of that as yet unacknowledged revolution that the USA under Roosevelt will act in this war.

Another element that isn't widely appreciated here is the genius that Roosevelt has for politics. He can play "em dirty"—that is, he has the common touch in politics. But somehow his character changes all that, in the main. Wilson was totally unsuccessful as a Socialist because he couldn't be a politician. Roosevelt eats it up—he loves the American game. Only he plays it for a purpose which he doesn't always know himself. He just plays it right, and with zest.

Roosevelt is the man who led the revolution and is still operating full steam ahead. And he'll "do things" with this "growing sentiment for a negotiated peace" that will be a surprise to that boy. The isolationists are going to be surprised at what their peace-move brings about when and if the time comes. It will be internationalist in a big way, and they are going to like it.

"God & Our Times"

IN the light of the foregoing the recent statement "God and our Times," by the Archbishop and Bishops looks even more forlorn than it does in its own illumination. "We believe (they say) that the present crisis in human history exceeds in magnitude and spiritual import any that has preceded it." Probably true. But when the spiritual import of the crisis turns out to be that it is a conflict between Christian Britain and the spiritual evil of the Nazi system, one begins to wonder in what religion British bishops are educated nowadays—probably the good old British religion. However, the statement becomes at least interesting in the following sentences:

The Nazi system . . . is evil, not because

(Continued on back page)

MAURICE L. ROWNTREE expresses another view about

OUR pacifist movement stands for the refusal of the method of war, but the unwillingness of so many of us to start a campaign for immediate negotiations reveals our perplexity upon the whole question.

We do not stand for the continuance of the war—we do believe that negotiation is better than enforced peace and that it is our duty to spread this belief in every right way we can.

But how can one negotiate with a man who has broken so many promises and who blatantly treats agreements merely as counters in the game of power-politics? Can one believe that any peace made with Hitler will be more than a jumping-off point for further aggression?

The only apparent way in which this can be avoided is by discovering some method of appeal to a body of people in Germany as well as here who will be determined that a just settlement shall be made, and, when made, that it shall be altered only by agreement in accordance with justice all round.

A DIFFICULT TASK

To bring this about is a task of great difficulty, and the continuance of the war keeps adding to that difficulty. But surely it is wrong to say (as in your article, Peace by Negotiation, July 18*) that if we can't trust Hitler we can't trust the German people, since "the German people as a whole shares in this particular infidelity." Remember that the German people have not been given a free voice on any question of policy since Hitler took control. When I went through Germany in 1939 I found almost everywhere among the people a great fear and horror of war.

To say that five-sixths of the German people now follow Hitler may well at the moment be true, because as yet they see no alternative that

does not appear to them to be worse. If however they could be convinced that Britain stood for a generous all-round settlement, Hitler's effective backing would, I believe, be greatly reduced and would sooner or later disappear.

We pacifists believe it right to appeal to the good and true in even the most hardened aggressor. But Hitler is out of range of our personal approach—he and his government can only be changed by events, and by the movement of thought in the two countries. But we are not powerless to influence those events and opinions.

If we can further a policy which will publicly renounce imperialism, will free India, will abolish the reign of privilege in this country, and will declare the broad outlines of a programme offering hope, security, and freedom for all, there is a chance that the German people will see that we are in earnest about these things and that, whatever their leaders do, the two peoples will draw nearer together, which is the beginning of making peace.

THE PEACE WE STAND FOR

The peace we stand for is not a peace of tyranny and persecution. It is not a shameful bargain at the expense of oppressed peoples, nor is it a peace that favours the dominance of any race or class. There is a peace of death as well as a peace of life, there is a co-called peace of utter meanness and cowardice which is even worse than war. We are no advocates of such a peace.

The peace we stand for—the only enduring peace—is a peace of justice, good will and mutual understanding. It is not likely that such a peace will be achieved quickly, but our problem is how best to set about achieving it now.

In order to do this rightly we must begin at home, seeing to it that we ourselves are filled with the spirit of fearless good will. We have then so

to learn to understand the thoughts and feelings of our neighbours that with them we may build up that public opinion upon which a just peace can be based.

Fearless good will must be exercised with perception and wisdom. I hope I would give my life, if giving it would help to bring true peace, but I shall not bring peace simply by advocating to my neighbours what appears to them as cowardice and betrayal.

I must find the way of appealing to the noble and heroic as well as to the loving in their souls, in such a way that their nobility and heroism, as well as their love, will be kindled and increased. The true spirit that shall overcome the world cannot be compelled: it must be encouraged to grow.

FURTHERING THE CAUSE

All this may mean that at a moment such as the present (though two months hence it may be different) we shall best further the cause of true peace not by advocating negotiation now but by the more fundamental work of promoting belief in the brotherhood of all men.

If, not only theoretically, but also emotionally, we can grasp the truth of the slogan "You are Myself," realizing as we go about that this mean or bossy person who gets my back up is not someone other but is essentially ME, and that I and he together have to unravel our common difficulty, then we pacifists will cease to spoil our cause by the petty spites and jealousies that we now and then display, and will indeed become a fearless and disciplined peace-army.

Such an army will always be seizing the initiative at the right time and in the right way. Vast losses it will probably suffer, but it will help to beat Nazism, imperialism and every other evil in the only way in which they can be beaten—by the victory of the spirit of truth and good will.

COMPETITION WE ARE BOUND TO LOSE

Following a letter from the Peace Pledge Union (published last week) to the Prime Minister on the subject of his speech on the bombing of cities comes news of a similar letter from the National Peace Council, from which the following extracts have been taken.

MEMBERS of the Executive Committee of the National Peace Council, meeting on July 17, felt a united obligation to express to you their deep dismay at the terms and temper of portions of your speech at the London County Hall on July 14, in which, anticipating an accumulating British air offensive on Germany, you appeared to envisage an unlimited competition in mutual destruction and to commit this country to a policy of retribution and retaliation.

The destruction or attempted destruction from the air of military objectives may be an indispensable feature of modern war, but warfare becomes nothing but a competition in barbarism if it is to be based on the principle of the repayment of suffering in kind, to which your declaration appeared to subscribe.

ARCHBISHOP'S WARNING

You spoke of "a new freedom and glory for all mankind." Do you really see this coming to birth in the almost endless vista of indiscriminate destruction which your speech foreshadowed? We recall and commend to you some words of the Archbishop of Canterbury, delivered in Convocation on May 27.

It is one thing to bomb military objectives and to cripple war industries, and in so doing it may be impossible to avoid inflicting loss and suffering on many civilians; but it is a very different thing to adopt the infliction of such loss and suffering as a deliberate policy . . . In any such competition with the enemy we are bound to lose, for there are some limits below which we cannot fall without violating the best and oldest instincts of British character . . . I don't believe that the great majority of British folk, even in the bombed areas, really want such a policy, and it is to be hoped that the Government, some of whose members have been using disquieting language, will resist any pressure and make it clear that they will adhere to what was once declared to be their own policy.

* It is worth while to read alongside this leading article in Peace News that entitled "Against Negotiation Now, II" by G. Lloyd Phelps in the July number of the Christian Pacifist.

Service Commentary

JUSTIFICATION
BY ACTION

IT is not often that pacifists have reason for self-congratulation, but a recent item of news gives us, I think, just cause. A recommendation that the ban on the employment of conscientious objectors in the London County Council's civil defence services should be raised has been made in a report from the Civil Defence Committee. The report states:

Since air raids began there has been a change in the attitude of members of civil defence services toward conscientious objectors employed in those services, due to the obviously dangerous and arduous work which they have undertaken.

It is only a small piece of news, and its immediate effect may not be very great. Men of good will in many parts of the country have long regarded it as scandalous that conscientious objectors should be exempted on condition that they take up ARP work and then find that their efforts to obtain such work are blocked by the narrow attitude adopted by many local authorities.

This report is perhaps one of the first examples of official recognition of these facts. But behind it I believe there lies a deeper significance. It is that society as a whole is beginning to recognize that the pacifist, in spite of conscientious objection to military service, is fully conscious of his social obligations and eager to fulfil them.

Every pacifist who during the past year or 18 months has been endeavouring to give service to the community has played a part in the achievement of this recognition and credit must go not only to those who work in the larger organizations, such as Pacifist Service Units, but also to the many who have formed small groups of their own and have been able to give perhaps only part of their time to service. The theory and practice of pacifism must be allied if we are to hope for a wider understanding from society as a whole.

IN BIRMINGHAM TOO

Not only in London is a change of official attitude toward conscientious objectors reported. In Birmingham a prominent civic figure has also announced an alteration in his views as a result of the work done by certain pacifists in the district.

This I understand to be due chiefly to the efforts of a group known as the Birmingham Pacifist Service, an organization of some 80 men and women working on a part-time basis. They have, however, formed themselves into a voluntary rescue squad and a mobile canteen party. They have their headquarters in the house of their chairman, Henry Whittaker. (Previously, I am told, this house was inhabited by a close relative of the late Mr. Neville Chamberlain). Equipment has been obtained from the local authorities, with whom of necessity the Pacifist Service has to maintain the closest co-operation. But the voluntary nature of their work is carefully preserved.

Lest anyone should think they have sold their souls for a mobile canteen and rescue equipment, it can be said in reply that when recently a Home Guard manoeuvre was held in their district and the regular civil defence services participated, the Pacifist Service did not take part, on the grounds that this type of rehearsal was not part of their function. Whether this action was justified or not, I leave for the individual pacifist to decide. All I would add is that I personally believe this small group, independent as yet of any larger pacifist organization, to be gladly undertaking arduous and dangerous work and in so doing to be convincing non-pacifist neighbours that pacifism can contribute something of value to the community.

C.F.D.

"Pick-and-Shovel" Peace-Making
Goes on

AMONG the items of real peace news which this paper reported in the days before the war were the various activities in many lands of the International Voluntary Service for Peace.

Founded 21 years ago by a Swiss, Pierre Cérésolle, the purpose of the IVSP is "to create a spirit of friendship and a constructive attitude toward peace among all peoples by giving practical help on the occasion of natural catastrophes, or in carrying out work of public utility."

It is a "pick-and-shovel" movement, and it is real peace news today to report that it continues to function and even to maintain friendly contacts across the frontiers.

Naturally, the work has changed a little in its nature, though not in its inspiration. Schemes on the scale of the relief work organized in Liechtenstein in 1928, when the Rhine burst its banks, are not possible today; on that occasion fifty different professions, trades, and occupations and 22 countries were represented among the 710 men and women who gave their services.

I spent a recent weekend at Esthwaite Lodge, near Hawkshead, in Lancashire, where nearly twenty pacifists are engaged in forestry work. The Lodge is rented by the IVSP from the Forestry Commission, and very early each morning the young volunteers set out for a long and hard day's work on the moors some miles away. Sisters, as they are called in the IVSP, attend to cooking and so on (though the men do not escape their share of household duties as well).

Despite their arduous work, the volunteers find time and energy for study

and various cultural activities—including a periodical "variety" show—which would do credit to many a more fortunately placed pacifist group.

And lately, through the Merseyside Hospitals Council, they have invited families suffering from the effects of bombing in that area to spend a fortnight in the peace and quiet of the Lake District. This scheme, and other relief work, is financed by Hawkshead volunteers and Sisters themselves.

But I thought all this was an isolated instance till I was told something of the work of the IVSP elsewhere in Britain, as well as abroad.

Some workers from Hawkshead have recently been transferred to a new IVSP land scheme at Hensingham, near Whitehaven, run in conjunction with the Cumberland Agricultural Committee. Near the Scottish border, at Kershope, is another forestry scheme.

Coming south to London, we find volunteers and sisters engaged on re-

lief work in West Ham, others on demolition and salvage work at Croydon.

In all relief schemes, members have constantly had in mind the preparation for schemes of post-war reconstruction. A list of those willing to serve a period with the IVSP after the war is being compiled and already includes the names of several volunteers at present on service.

As for activities abroad, I saw a bulletin issued by the Swiss branch which gave news from Holland and America; it told how, in Norway, a small group maintained IVSP traditions of service by giving help after a devastating flood.

It reported on relief work being undertaken by Swiss members in France: eight of them, as well as two Belgian Sisters and some French friends, look after a children's colony and a maternity home. They have organized and now superintend the regular distribution of milk to 8,000 children. Another Sister works in a refugee camp, occupied chiefly by Jews from Germany.

All the quiet work being done by isolated groups and individuals will not be known till after the war. But there is hope for the future in messages from individual members in other lands, showing how they remain firm in the faith which brought them into the work of the IVSP; and in the way the IVSP itself is carrying on, with an eye to the great possibilities of the post-war period.

J.W.C.

Address of the IVSP in Britain is: 1 Lyddon Terrace, Leeds, 2.

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GROUP NOTES

Vital Links

By JOHN BARCLAY

AN idea, whether good or bad, needs to be tested. Until it has been clothed in the dress of an experiment it carries little weight—and remains an idea. Once it has been demonstrated to be practical or sound it will be gladly accepted and probably improved upon.

I have been entrusted with the idea of Area Development, and I believe that it has vast possibilities. Before going too far or too fast, it needs trying out and making known to as many members of our movement as will read or listen. Whether it remains a simple idea or becomes a new conception altogether, certain it is that ways and means must be found for the rapid interchange and discussion of the idea itself.

Here is a chance for the building up of a network of news-sheets or magazines circulating easily and regularly among groups in a restricted area. Already there are dozens of such magazines mostly serving as a link between isolated members who have been separated by evacuation or tribunal decisions. Others are more ambitious and cover distances corresponding to the area boundaries which we are attempting to define and within which new activities and responsibilities are shaping.

I am anxious to put all editors of already established sheets in touch with one another and then to ask them to send a copy of their own particular effort to each of the others. My aim is to have a monthly journal reporting group activities within each area, and also a large number of group news-sheets acting as mediums between group HQ and the members. In the same way that Peace News holds us together in the wide national effort, so could these monthly locals feed, stimulate, and co-ordinate local ideas and development everywhere.

This plan will demand initiative and hard work; but we are not lacking in the one or afraid of the other.

1st Move: Send your local news sheet or regional magazine to me at 6 Endsleigh Street, with the name and address of the Editor, and I will compile a complete list which I will send out to all editors.

2nd Move: When you get the list please send a copy of your magazine to each editor on the list and study the ideas contained in those that reach you.

GROUP ACTIVITIES

Gloucester.—Last Friday I was invited to attend a meeting of the new Regional Committee. Delegates were present from Gloucester, Tewkesbury, Cheltenham, Dursley, and Stroud. The principle of regional co-operation was unanimously accepted and all agreed to recommend that closer links be forged be-

tween the groups themselves: a system of group visitation by local speakers is to be arranged. Gloucester pointed out how successfully the FoR and PPU groups combine in their district. There is a regular joint meeting of their members, and speakers of both organizations visit the group.

The most important step taken at the meeting was the decision to run a regional news-sheet. An editor and two sub-editors were appointed and work is to be begun at once on producing the first monthly issue.

The indefatigable Leonard Crow, who has done so much to foster this plan of regional co-ordination, was absent owing to having recently undergone a serious operation. He sent valuable recommendations, all of which were included in the final draft. Ted Bigland, of Tewkesbury, was elected chairman with acclamation. Two hours' work laid the foundations. The next three months will determine the quality of the workers. I have no doubts!

J.B.

Open-air Speakers' Classes.—A series of open-air speakers' classes, organized by the London Area on behalf of the North London Region, is to be run at the Independent Church, Edmonton, at 7.30 p.m. on five successive Tuesdays starting next week (Aug. 12). The classes will be conducted by Sybil Morrison, Robert King, and Donald Port, and anyone interested is invited to attend.

Belgium's Starving Children

(Continued from page 1)

was true that the same arguments had been advanced during the last war, when Herbert Hoover distributed nearly a billion dollars worth of supplies under the hungry eyes of German soldiers who hitched their belts tighter month after month. Now again Mr. Hoover proposes to set up an American soup kitchen for the feeding of 1,000,000 indigent adults and 2,000,000 children in Belgium...

Guarantees have been given in writing by the German Government that none of this food will directly or indirectly be taken by Germans nor will the German Army requisition provisions of like character. To give double assurance, Mr. Hoover states that he will confine shipments to ten days' supply so that at no time would it ever be possible to seize more than enough to feed the German population for one day.

Meanwhile, two Americans of much skill and experience in famine-relief expeditions, Mr. William C. McDonald and Columba P. Murray Jr., have been waiting in Berlin for word to organize their mission in Belgium.

These same two men for a year and a half have supervised dealing out the food supplies from the Hoover-sponsored Commission for Polish Relief to hungry Poland, where two depots have been set up in Krakow and Warsaw for distribution to Poles, Jews and Ukrainians. They tell me there has been no interference with their operations by German military forces nor has there been any attempt

by Germans to seize any supplies.

Herbert Hoover points to this example in Poland as proof of what may be expected from the German Army in fulfilment of its undertaking in Belgium. He insists that if we had a moral obligation to feed starving Belgians a generation ago, we have the same obligation now.

So matters stand, and the controversy between high-spirited, well-nourished Americans is energetically battled back and forth while René Colin and 2,000,000 other Belgian boys and girls continue to be tortured by hunger...

Meanwhile, the famished do not revolt, for the will to protest fails with dying strength... It is a nasty world, this Europe after this second winter of war. My sleep is haunted by black dreams of another winter of want in Belgium. Yet no-one desponds, and the courage and nobility of the people are an inspiration, as I told a banker friend who came to see me off at the train.

"Yes, we will go on," he said. "The Belgians are brave and no-one will raise his hands in surrender. But no-one dares to think of the future"—and his own hands went up to the heavens—"for that way madness lies."

The banker asked me timidly about the Hoover Plan, but I told him what I had told the Secretary General of Agriculture, that the American people were against the Hoover Plan because they thought it would give aid to the enemy.

He was mystified at this and, being a banker, used earmarked gold to illustrate how all shipments to Belgium could be identified and thus safeguarded to the intended destination. He asked why, if that could be done with gold, the same thing could not be done with provisions.

At that moment the train came, so I did not have to answer. I was very glad the train came.

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Methodists & the War

"THE press and the BBC made much of the action of the recent Methodist Conference in its support of the war as a 'sacred cause,'" wrote the Rev. C. Leslie Brewer, of Helmsley, York, in a letter published by the Manchester Guardian on July 29. To put the declaration "in its true perspective," he commented:

A fuller account of the event is given in the *Methodist Recorder* published today (July 24). The voting—136 for, 16 against, and nine neutral—means that more than one in seven did not vote for the declaration, and that in an assembly composed of folk who were nearly all over fifty years of age.

When we bear in mind that probably 40 per cent of younger ministers and students in the Methodist Church, who were scarcely represented are behind the Rev. Henry Carter in his opposition, it puts a different complexion on the affair. The vast majority of Methodists may support the war method, as the president said, but the minority is neither negligible nor uninfluential.

COMMENTARY

(Continued from page 2)

It is strong, nor because it threatens us, but because it affronts those eternal laws of goodness which are implanted in man by God. A German victory would not make these evil things to be good things. "None is good save one, even God." What God ordains is eternally good and no evil can defeat him. History is always and at all points subject to him. He is Creator and man is creature. In resisting the menace of Nazi evil we bear witness to the truth of his laws.

That seems to require some exegesis. Anyhow it is odd that the Bishops did not find out all this when the Nazi system was not quite so strong and did not so obviously threaten us—at the time e.g. of the Munich settlement. We shall be printing a more detailed examination of the statement by Canon Code next week.

Pacifism & Politics

THE *Times* (July 31) reports that "under Mr. Gandhi's policy of non-violent pacifism in relation to the war" the membership of the Indian National Congress has declined rapidly. Before the war there were more than 45 million members; in 1939-40, 3 million; in the present year 12 millions. "The decrease has been most marked where Congress was strongest—the United Provinces; the decrease there in round figures was from 1,472,000 to 259,000."

How reliable these figures are we have no means of knowing; but assuming them to be accurate, they reveal the gulf between pacifism and politics. It is interesting to note that the reduction in the United Provinces is proportionately almost exactly the same as that of effective membership of the PPU in this country. The UP figures in each case are ten times that of the PPU and probably an examination of the causes would reveal them to be much the same.

German "Disaster"

MR. A. J. Cummings ventured "to repeat a commonplace" in his "Spotlight" in the *News Chronicle*, July 25:

Either triumph or disaster; these are the alternatives to which Hitler has committed an efficient war-machine and a reluctant people. It is our business to do everything that the wit of man can devise to assist our Russian ally in bringing about a German disaster.

As Mr. Cummings is one of the many British apologists who have attempted to explain away the anomaly of a democracy embracing a ruthlessly totalitarian ally in order to fight a ruthlessly totalitarian foe, it is not impertinent to ask him to do a little hard thinking about a German disaster at the hands of Communist Russia.

By "triumph" he means "a complete and conclusive military victory... involving German occupation and control"; so I presume he means by disaster no less complete a victory for Russia. Certainly the mere halting of the German progress, however permanent, would not be a disaster for Germany, since Germany's main object is to secure her Eastern frontier against attack. And the Russians are not going to stop at holding the Germans, at whatever point, unless it is because they are unable to press on to "a complete and conclusive military victory."

Stalin's Victory

WHAT, then, does Mr. Cummings—or any one else—think Stalin will make of his victory? Presumably the occupation will be British as well as Russian. But what of the control? Joint action to fight a defensive war against a common enemy is one thing. But any attempt at joint control when the allies are—as is openly admitted—at complete variance in their attitudes to positive policy will prove to be a very different thing. Even supposing that the Communists do not succeed in using the opportunity to replace throughout Europe the totalitarianism we are fighting by their own totalitarianism, there must follow an unholy struggle between the "allies" which will make nonsense of the victory which Mr. Cummings and others want us to help Russia to achieve. The fundamental incompatibility of purpose which exists now and is doing now its hidden work of undermining any moral basis there may be in the British war-effort—hidden, that is, except when it suits Mr. Morrison to reveal it as a reason for continuing to ban the *Daily Worker*—will be too hideous a reality then for the most skilful apologist to hide.

NEWS of C.O.s

Labour Minister's Powers

UNDER the National Service Act, 1941, all conditionally registered conscientious objectors can be called up for civil defence. News of how the Ministry of Labour is proceeding to do this is contained in the July issue of the Central Board for COs Bulletin—the first number to appear in print.

Though varying to some extent, broadly speaking the procedure is to send to such COs notices asking them to call for interviews at Labour Exchanges "to discuss with you whether you are already engaged on work of such importance that you should remain in it or whether you could take up work of greater importance."

Medical notices generally follow the interviews, unless the CO is obviously unfit or is doing bona fide land work or other work of national importance. Suitable cases are then drafted into the Auxiliary Fire Service—the only civil defence force at present involved.

Many conditionally registered COs have had notices for interview, and sometimes medical notices have followed, even though the men are doing hospital work. Nor is compliance with a tribunal order any protection against compulsory enrolment in the AFS.

PENALTIES

Thus, while those COs who are prepared to join the AFS, but have been excluded will presumably benefit, those who object may be penalized. Maximum penalties for refusing to be drafted are 6 months' imprisonment or £50 fine or both, from a police court, and double from a higher court.

On the other hand, there is a possibility of appeal—but only in the case of those who had accepted a local tribunal's conditional exemption. Though the normal time for appealing against such a decision may have passed, it is possible to apply—as some have done successfully—to the Divisional Office of the Ministry of Labour for an extension of the time on the ground that entirely new circumstances have arisen.

WIDE POWERS

Apart from these provisions for enrolment for civil defence, the Ministry of Labour also has power to direct (through the machinery of a Labour Exchange) anyone in the United Kingdom to perform any specified services of which he or she is considered capable.

This, too, is distinct from the Registration for Employment Order, so that compulsion can be applied without a person having to register. Nor does registration as a CO—even unconditionally—by a tribunal make any difference to this power of industrial conscription, though there is a right of appeal similar to that provided for in the Registration for Employment Order.

INFORMATIVE LITERATURE

Information on this subject is given in another of the CBCO's excellent series of well-documented and thoroughly informative "Broadsheets"—No. 9, *Control of Employment*. Another, No. 10, deals with *Police Court Procedure*. All the broadsheets are obtainable at 1d. each (12 or more post free) from the CBCO, 6, Endsleigh-street, W.C.1, but cash must be sent with order.

Don't Forget the

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Send admission fee, 1s. (includes tea—bring food) for credentials, to: Donald Port, 8 Endsleigh Gardens, W.C.1.

Now that the Bulletin (as stated above) is printed, it too is available for general distribution. Single copies cost 3d. (postage extra), but an annual subscription is 3s., post free. While discounts are allowed for quantities of not less than 12. This monthly is essential to all who need reliable information, and it will therefore still be supplied to advisory bureaux free, although where they can afford it they are urged to send 3s. a year for it to the Central Board.

Mr. Hugh Brock, of C.A. Brock and Co.—the printing firm which undertook to print *Peace News* at a very critical time last year—was sentenced to six months' imprisonment at Willesden Police Court on Thursday of last week.

He was first ordered to be taken before the Medical Board with a view to being medically examined, and was brought back into court when it was reported that he had refused to submit to examination. He was taken immediately to Wandsworth prison.

Mr. Brock's older brother is, of course, continuing their business.

Owing to an obvious typographical error, we appeared to publicize, the other week, a war "register." Actually, of course, the notice referred to the *War Resister*, the quarterly journal of the War Resisters' International, 11 Abbey Rd., Enfield, Middlesex.

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LAND & COMMUNITY

CHRISTIAN PACIFIST (28, single) seeks membership land community; or situation, horticultural or agricultural, affording opportunities fellowship, conducive development religious, cultural interests.—Box 877 *Peace News*, 3 Blackstock Rd., N.4.

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LITERATURE &c.

QUAKERISM. Information and literature respecting the Faith and Practice of the Religious Society of Friends, free on application to the Friends' Home Service Committee, Friends House, Euston Road, London, N.W.1.

PERSONAL

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